

## II. AMENDMENT TO CLAIMS

Claim 1. (Cancelled)

Claim 2. (Currently Amended) A plasmid capable of autonomous replication in bacteria of the genus *Corynebacterium*, said plasmid comprising:

- i) ~~at least a portion of the nucleotide sequence of plasmid pTET3 or pCRY4~~ one region that encodes a protein involved in a biosynthetic pathway selected from the group consisting of L-lysine and pantothenic acid;
- ii) at least one DNA replication region obtained from one of the plasmids pTET3 or pCRY4, and
- iii) at least one region that encodes a protein for ~~active~~ antibiotic resistance comprising a gene selected from the group consisting of a gene encoding a protein conferring tetracycline resistance, a gene encoding a protein conferring streptomycin and spectinomycin resistance, and a gene conferring sulfamethoxazole resistance, wherein said genes are obtained from the antibiotic resistance region of plasmid pTET3, as set forth in Figure 5.

Claims 3-5. (Cancelled)

Claim 6. (Currently Amended) A plasmid capable of autonomous replication in bacteria of the genus *Corynebacterium* containing:

- i) at least one DNA replication region obtained from one of the plasmids pGA1, pGA2, pTET3 or pCRY4, and
- ii) at least one ~~antibiotic resistance~~ region encodes a protein for antibiotic resistance comprising a gene selected from the group consisting of a gene encoding a protein conferring tetracycline resistance, a gene encoding a protein conferring streptomycin and spectinomycin resistance, and a gene conferring sulfamethoxazole resistance, wherein said genes are obtained from the antibiotic resistance region of plasmid pTET3, as set forth in Figure 5.

Claims 7-14. (Cancelled)

Claim 15. (Previously Added) The plasmids of claim 2 or 6, wherein said plasmids are capable of autonomous replication in bacteria of the species *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) The plasmid of claim 6, wherein said plasmid consists of ~~constituents of plasmid pTET3~~ the DNA replication region obtained from pTET3 and at least one antibiotic resistance gene obtained from the antibiotic resistance gene region of plasmid pTET3, as set forth in Figure 5.

Claim 17. (Allowed) Plasmid vector pSELF3-1, which has a length of 7.0 kbp and the restriction map depicted in Figure 6.

Claim 18. (Previously Added) The plasmid of claim 6, wherein said plasmid comprises the DNA replication region of plasmid pGA1 and the tetA gene, imparting tetracycline resistance obtained from the antibiotic resistance region of plasmid pTET3.

Claim 19. (Allowed) Plasmid vector pSELF1-1, which has a length of ~ 7.3 kbp and the restriction map depicted in Figure 7.

Claim 20. (Allowed) An isolated plasmid, designated pTET3, wherein said plasmid is characterized by:

- i) a length of ~ 27.8 kbp and the restriction map shown in Figure 1,
- ii) a replication region comprising the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1, and
- iii) an antibiotic resistance region, shown in Figure 5, consisting of a tetA gene imparting tetracycline resistance, an aadA gene imparting streptomycin and spectinomycin resistance and a sulI gene imparting sulfamethoxazole resistance.

Claim 21. (Previously Added) The plasmid pTET3 of claim 20, wherein said plasmid is compatible with plasmid pCRY4 characterized by:

- i) a length of ~ 48 kbp and the restriction map shown in Figure 2,
- ii) a replication region comprising the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:4, and

iii) deposited in *Corynebacterium glutamicum* under DSM number 5816.

Claim 22. (Currently Amended) The plasmid pTET3 of claim ~~30~~ 21, wherein said plasmid is compatible with one or more of the plasmids selected from the group consisting of pGA1, pGA2, ~~pGA3~~, pAG3, pBL1, and pHM1519.

Claim 23. (Previously Added) An isolated plasmid, designated pCRY4, wherein said plasmid is characterized by:

- i) a length of ~ 48 kbp and the restriction map shown in Figure 2, and
- ii) a replication region comprising the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:4.

Claim 24. (Previously Added) The isolated plasmid pCRY4 of claim 23, wherein said plasmid is compatible with plasmid pTET3 characterized by:

- i) a length of ~ 48 kbp and the restriction map shown in Figure 2,
- ii) a replication region comprising the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
- iii) an antibiotic resistance region, shown in Figure 5, consisting of a tetA gene imparting tetracycline resistance, an aadA gene imparting streptomycin and spectinomycin resistance and a sulI gene imparting sulfamethoxazole resistance, and
- iv) deposited in *Corynebacterium glutamicum* under DSM number 5816.

Claim 25. (Currently Added) The isolated plasmid pCRY4 of claim ~~16~~ 24, wherein said plasmid is compatible with one or more of the plasmids selected from the group consisting of pGA1, pGA2, ~~pGA3~~, pAG3, pBL1, and pHM1519.

Claim 26. (Currently Amended) An isolated DNA sequence encoding at least one protein selected from the group consisting of:

- i) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 ~~having the function of a stabilization protein~~, and
- ii) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 ~~having the function of a replication protein~~.

Claim 27. (Allowed) An isolated DNA sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:1.

Claim 28. (Previously Added) An isolated DNA sequence encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 ~~having the function of a replication protein.~~

Claim 29. (Allowed) An isolated DNA comprising SEQ ID NO:4.

Claims 30-32. (Cancelled)

Claim 33. (New) The plasmid of claim 2, wherein the region encoding a protein involved in a biosynthetic pathway consists of a lysC gene of *C. glutamicum* encoding an aspartate kinase and a panD gene of *C. glutamicum* encoding an aspartate  $\alpha$ -decarboxylase.